

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 161517  
ORIGIN EA-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 HA-02 NEA-07 ARA-10 INR-05  
SP-02 NSC-05 L-01 IO-06 /061 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TIMBS:DLFIELD/REFRITTS:EVC  
APPROVED BY EA:RBOAKLEY  
HA/HR:LMORIN (DRAFT)  
OFDA:RHARRIS (DRAFT)  
NEA/PAB:DARCHARD (DRAFT)  
HA/ORM:WGMETSON (DRAFT)  
ARA/MEX:ECBITTNER (DRAFT)

-----036330 242047Z /70

R 240139Z JUN 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON  
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII 0626

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 161517

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, SREF, SHUM, BG, BM

SUBJECT: MUSLIMS FROM BURMA IN BANGLADESH

REF: A) DACCA 3845; B) RANGOON 2133; C) DACCA 3712;  
D) STATE 127656; E) STATE 113331

1. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT EMBASSY SHOULD REQUEST APPROPRIATE LEVEL MEETING WITH GUB TO PRESENT USG VIEWS  
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CONCERNING THE INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM POSED BY THE FLIGHT OF OVER 150,000 MUSLIMS FROM THE ARAKAN STATE INTO BANGLADESH. IN DOING SO, EMB SHOULD EMPHASIZE THAT USG HAS NOT ADOPTED A PUBLIC OR PRIVATE POSITION SUPPORTING ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER, GIVEN THE CONFLICTING REPORTS AND ALLEGATIONS BY THE CONTENDING PARTIES. WE ALSO HAVE MADE NO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON THE SITUATION OTHER THAN THOSE

ANNOUNCING U.S. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS.

2. THE EMBASSY SHOULD STATE THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF A GUB AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON THE UNITED STATES INTEREST IN THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES FROM BURMA IS BEING RAISED IN RANGOON. OUR CONCERN IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR CONTINUING EFFORTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO RELIEVE THE HUMAN SUFFERING AND DISTRESS OF REFUGEES -- WHATEVER THE CAUSE. OUR GLOBAL

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES HAS BEEN DURING THIS CENTURY AN ENDURING FEATURE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. THE OUTFLOW OF HOMELESS PERSONS FROM ARAKAN INTO BANGLADESH IS THE LATEST EXAMPLE OF DIFFICULTIES WHICH RESULT IN A CALL UPON AMERICAN AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES, COMMODITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.

3. EMBASSY SHOULD ALSO NOTE THAT INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN CLEARLY THE POTENTIAL DANGERS TO COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN AND COUNTRIES OF RECEIPT BY LONG-TERM REFUGEES WHO EVENTUALLY DEVELOP POLITICAL GOALS AND ORGANIZATIONS. IN ADDITION, EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT WHEN SOLUTIONS ARE NOT REACHED EARLY ON THE SITUATION TENDS TO CONGEAL, THEREBY MAKING RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM STILL MORE DIFFICULT AND CREATING THE LONG-TERM REFUGEE PROBLEM. MOREOVER, THE ALLEGATIONS BEING MADE BY MUSLIMS IN BANGLADESH  
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DESH CONTINUE TO ATTRACT CONSIDERABLE INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION. WE ARE PLEASED THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS HAVE CONTINUED TO MEET TO DISCUSS THIS MUTUAL PROBLEM AND HOPE THE SITUATION CAN BE RESOLVED IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES.

4. EMBASSY SHOULD SPECIFY THAT A SIMILAR APPROACH HAS BEEN MADE BY THE U.S. EMBASSY IN DACCA.

5. FYI: GUB OFFICIALS HAVE OCCASIONALLY COMPARED THEIR ACTIONS IN ARAKAN TO U.S. HANDLING OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION FROM MEXICO. SITUATIONS ARE NOT VERY COMPARABLE, PARTICULARLY AS US-MEXICAN GOVERNMENTS COOPERATE ON THE PROBLEM AND IT DOES NOT HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. MEXICANS ARE NOT IN REFUGEE CAMPS BUT INTEGRATED INTO THE ECONOMY OF THE U.S., AND THE REASON FOR THEIR PRESENCE IN THE PULL OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S. IN ADDITION THE USG HAS AVOIDED ACTIONS WHICH WOULD LEAD TO MASS RETURN TO MEXICO. VANCE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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